

operated and maintained in accordance with the agreement. The owners of the ditch would remain liable for damage to park resources caused by negligence or intentional acts; (3) the bill will not affect any liability for damage to park resources occurring before the bill's enactment; (4) the bill will not restrict any activity related to monitoring, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, or use of the ditch that was authorized or approved by the National Park Service as of the date of the bill's enactment; and (5) use of water carried by the ditch for a purpose other than irrigation will not adversely affect the ditch's right-of-way.

**Colorado-Big Thompson Project.**—The bill includes provisions specifying that its enactment will not restrict any activity related to monitoring, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, or use of the project's facilities that were allowed as of the date of the bill's enactment or prohibit or restrict the conveyance of water through the Alva B. Adams Tunnel for any purpose.

**East Shore Trail.**—The bill requires the National Park Service to identify an alignment for a bicycle trail within the "East Shore Trail Area" that is excluded from the wilderness. The Park Service will decide whether to authorize construction of the trail and until construction is authorized, lands in the "East Shore Trail Area" will continue to be managed to maintain the option of its being designated as wilderness in the future.

**Indian Peaks Wilderness and Arapaho Recreation Area.**—The bill adjusts the boundaries of the Indian Peaks Wilderness and the Arapaho National Recreation Area so as to reduce the recreation area by about 1,000 acres and increase the wilderness by about 1,000 acres.

**Leiffer Tract Lease Authority.**—The bill allows the National Park Service to lease the "Leiffer tract," a parcel of Federal land located outside the Park's boundary but managed by the National Park Service that includes an historic cabin and several other buildings. Any lease would be under an existing law that requires leased property to be used for activities consistent with the purposes of the Park and compatible with National Park Service programs.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2007*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, May 14, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 1124, H. Res. 223, and H. Res. 385.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 342 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1124, to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 343 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 223, supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 344 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 385, recognizing National AmeriCorps Week, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING MICHAEL D. THOMAS

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2007*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael D. Thomas, who was killed on April 27, 2007 in Hirat Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Michael was a sniper, a weapons sergeant and a combat medic assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, NC, and was killed when his unit came under rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire.

I did not have the privilege of knowing Staff Sergeant Thomas personally but by all accounts he was a dedicated family man who was devoted to serving his country. He grew up in Seffner, FL, and joined the military police in 1991, serving in Somalia and in Korea. After already having served in the military police for 13 years and with only 3½ years until he could retire, he volunteered to be a Green Beret. At 34, Michael was one of the oldest in his unit, which earned him the nickname "Gramps."

Michael was a highly decorated soldier. His awards and commendations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Defense Medal, the Parachutist Badge and the Special Forces Tab.

Michael was an avid Tampa Bay Buccaneer fan who visited the team's training camp whenever he could. I've been told that he decorated his Fort Bragg room with Buccaneer memorabilia, including signed footballs and helmets. He was also an accomplished guitarist who liked watching movies and going for long walks with his wife, Teresa.

Madam Speaker, my heart aches for Michael's family. He leaves behind his wife, Teresa, his children, Diana and Craig, his sisters, Krista and Cassie, his brother, Jaye, his granddaughter, Alexis, and his parents, Debbie and Robert Kirkpatrick. May God bless the Thomas family and continue to watch over the country that Staff Sergeant Thomas so loved. We shall never forget him.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2007*

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I was unable to be present on the House floor on Monday, May 14 for recorded votes because illness prevented timely travel.

However, had I been present I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 1124; a bill to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999; "aye" on H. Res. 223, a bill supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims; and "aye" on

H. Res. 385, a bill recognizing National AmeriCorps Week.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2007*

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, because of illness, I was not present for votes on May 14. I would like the RECORD to reflect how I would have voted had I been here: Rollcall No. 342 on H.R. 1124, I would have voted "yea"; Rollcall No. 343 on H. Res. 223, I would have voted "yea"; Rollcall No. 344 on H. Res. 385, I would have voted "yea."

IN HONOR OF V. LANE RAWLINS  
AND HIS SERVICE TO WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

#### HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 15, 2007*

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize V. Lane Rawlins for his 7 years of leadership as the ninth president of Washington State University (WSU). President Rawlins used those 7 years to build a focused direction for the University, linking world-class research with outstanding undergraduate education.

Part of this world-class research has come from the Agriculture Research Service facility at Johnson Hall, a project that I am proud to have worked on with President Rawlins. This facility provides a place for federal and state research scientists to work together with the academic community in support of technology-based research programs in wheat, barley, and grain legumes.

Providing quality education is key to increasing America's competitiveness and creating a skilled, 21st century workforce. One of my first acts in Congress was to introduce legislation that would reauthorize and strengthen the WWAMI program. I applaud President Rawlins for his support of this important program that recruits and trains primary care doctors to practice in underserved areas like the rural communities of Eastern Washington.

President Rawlins has made it a priority to develop Washington State University campuses statewide. In particular, the Nursing Building at Washington State University Spokane will allow students involved in the nursing and dental programs at WSU to start their first year of training in Spokane and participate in the WWAMI program.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend President Rawlins for his outstanding work as the ninth president of Washington State University. I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking President V. Lane Rawlins for his years of service to the University and the Eastern Washington community.